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February 12, 2004 LB 834, 858, 963

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska. As stated by the Clerk, there are committee amendments by the Government, Military Affairs. As Chairperson of that committee, Senator Schimek, you're recognized to open on committee amendments.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. As Senator Vrtiska explained, the bill with the amendments are actually three separate bills. The other two bills are LB 834 and LB 858. And I'm just going to briefly describe what's in those other bills. LB 834 provides that an officer or elected person who is called to active service in excess of 30 days at the request of the federal government, a state, meaning another state, or other agency or entity is entitled to reimbursement of his or her privately purchased or employer provided health insurance. And, of course, in order to get that reimbursement, evidence of payment must be provided. It then goes on to say that the state of Nebraska will not pay or advance the cost of the health insurance reimbursement. Also the state is exempt from the requirement of reimbursing officers and enlisted persons for their health insurance costs. The other bill, LB 858, expands who is eligible to serve as Adjutant General in the following ways; allowing either active or retired officers to serve which they can't do now, and removing the requirement that the officer be of the field or line in active service and reducing the number of years of service in the National Guard from seven to five for those who want to serve as Adjutant General. If a retired officer is appointed, he or she can't be retired for more than two years. I think the feeling is that this will broaden the applicant field. LB 858 also expands who may be appointed as assistant to the Adjutant General to include a Deputy Adjutant General, Chief of Staff or Deputy Director, but requires the assistant to be active member of the guard. And, finally, if a Deputy Adjutant General, Chief of Staff, or Deputy Director has not been appointed, the Adjutant General may delegate the authority to perform the duties of Adjutant General to any active officer of the Nebraska military who holds at least the rank of colonel. Funds made available by the federal government in excess of the amount of the Deputy Adjutant General, Chief of Staff or Deputy Director's salary can be used to reduce the amount required to be paid by the state. With